

Northwest Open Space Plan

Las Vegas, Nevada



Prepared for:
City of Las Vegas
Comprehensive Planning Division



Prepared by:
Greenways Incorporated

In Association with:
The Greenway Team
JW Zunino Associates
ETC Institute
The Trust for Public Land



Overview

After more than two decades of record population growth, the city of Las Vegas has determined the need to establish an open space master plan for the Northwest region to balance growth and development with conservation of native lands and rural character that is historic to this part of the City. The primary goal of the Open Space Plan is to *“Improve the quality of life and community character of northwest Las Vegas with a well planned system of interconnected open spaces, greenways, trails, parks and protected landscapes, and achieve optimal, cost effective, sustainable implementation and management of open space resources.”*

The approximately 50-square miles that make up Northwest Las Vegas is bounded by Cheyenne Avenue to the south, Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area to the west, Moccasin Drive to the north and the City of North Las Vegas to the east (Decatur Blvd).

The purpose of this Open Space Plan is to protect non-programmed and programmed open space which in the future can be devoted to 1) the preservation of natural resources; 2) outdoor recreation; 3) preservation of historic and cultural property; 4) protection of scenic landscapes; and 5) protection of public health, safety and welfare. To accomplish this purpose, the city of Las Vegas needs to adopt aggressive policies and programs that balance growth with natural resource conservation. The city is in need of a stewardship program that protects valued open space before it is permanently lost to development.



The Open Space Planning Process

The city of Las Vegas and the project consultant team of Greenways Incorporated, The Greenway Team, JW Zunino and Associates, ETC Institute and The Trust for Public Land have developed this plan in cooperation with a citizens’ Open Space Advisory Committee. Additionally, a Technical Working Group consisting of federal, state and local government agencies that represent land management, community development, utilities, law enforcement, stormwater management, and resource planning in the Greater Las Vegas area actively participated throughout the planning process.

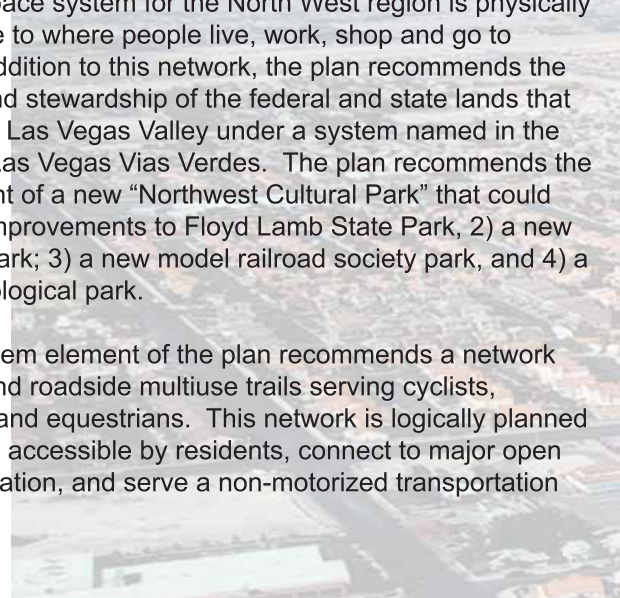
Key Recommendations of the Plan

The consultants for this Plan recommend that the city of Las Vegas establish a planning goal of protecting 30% of the land in the Northwest Region as future open space. This 30% goal is recommended as a minimum target based on the ecological, social, economic, and political realities of Las Vegas and is designed to ensure a quality of life in the 21st century that is progressive, sustainable, healthy and economically viable.

The open space system defined in the Plan is based on a “hub and spoke” concept that provides residents of the North West Region with convenient access to a linked arrangement of park and trails, residential neighborhoods, employment centers, and open space. There are four major components of open space identified in the plan 1) protection of natural system, 2) active recreational landscapes, 3) historic and cultural landscapes, and 4) contiguous open space corridors (such as greenways and trails).

This open space system for the North West region is physically located close to where people live, work, shop and go to school. In addition to this network, the plan recommends the protection and stewardship of the federal and state lands that surround the Las Vegas Valley under a system named in the plan as the Las Vegas Vias Verdes. The plan recommends the establishment of a new “Northwest Cultural Park” that could include: 1) improvements to Floyd Lamb State Park, 2) a new equestrian park; 3) a new model railroad society park, and 4) a new archaeological park.

The trail system element of the plan recommends a network of off-road and roadside multiuse trails serving cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians. This network is logically planned to be directly accessible by residents, connect to major open space destination, and serve a non-motorized transportation function.



Improving Quality of Life and Optimal, cost effective, sustainable implementation



One of the primary goals of the plan is to better protect the native landscapes and natural infrastructure including wildlife habitats, arroyos and washes, viewsheds and desert ecosystems. These objectives would be achieved through techniques that include promoting higher density conservation-based development, partnering with other agencies such as the Clark County Flood Control District to protect arroyos, acquiring targeted open space parcels through a partnership with private sector conservation organizations such as The Trust for Public Land, and defining opportunities for contiguous open space to be assembled in the Northwest region through the land development process.

The plan addresses both routine and long term remedial maintenance and management considerations, including specific procedures and projected costs for operations and management. The plan also includes recommendations for funding and operating the emerging Northwest open space program.

Finally, this plan recommends establishing a Vias Verdes on the lands surrounding the Las Vegas Valley. The Vias Verdes would be a large-scale conservation strategy for the publicly and privately owned lands that surround the valley and form the mountainous visual backdrop. The lands within the proposed Vias Verdes would include Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Sheep Mountains, Sloan Canyon National Recreation Area, Desert National Wildlife Refuge, and Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.



Next Steps and Implementation Strategy

The next steps for the Open Space Plan will be to implement the recommendations provided in this Plan. There are a number of different recommendations that are called for, including policies, programs, facilities and operations. These are organized under the following short-term, mid-term and long-term strategies.

Short-Term: Zero to 2 years (FY 05-06)

- Revise subdivision ordinance to promote more open space conservation.
- Complete design program for Northwest Cultural Park.
- Work with the Clark County Flood Control District to define protection strategies for arroyos and washes in the Northwest region.
- Apply for SNPLMA funding to pay for the open space acquisitions and facilities recommended in this Plan.
- Work with partners to acquire the most highly ranked and threatened open space properties.
- Build number one ranked trails, roadway crossings and trailheads.
- Begin construction of Northwest Cultural Park.
- Establish the Las Vegas Valley Land Trust.
- Define appropriate management roles open space resources.



Mid-Term: 3 to 5 years (FY 07-09)

- Continue construction of Northwest Cultural Park facilities.
- Work with partners to acquire the secondarily ranked open space.
- Build the number two and three ranked trail, roadway crossings and trailheads defined by this Plan.
- Define operation and management agreements for lands and facilities that are part of this phase of implementation.

Long-Term: 6 years and beyond (FY 10)

- Update this Open Space Plan, reconsider the recommendations and priorities of this Plan.
- Continue construction of Northwest Cultural Park facilities.
- Work with partners to acquire outstanding open space properties.
- Build the number four and five ranked trail facilities, roadway and trailheads defined by this Plan.

Community Character and management of open spaces



Improving Quality of Life and Community Character

Optimal, cost effective,
sustainable implementation and management
of open spaces

Acknowledgements

The Northwest Open Space Plan has been carefully crafted through the hard work and dedication of a broad resource team, including residents of Las Vegas, representatives from federal, state and local government agencies and staff, City of Las Vegas staff and a team of consultants with expertise in open space planning. The City of Las Vegas would like to thank all who participated in the planning process.

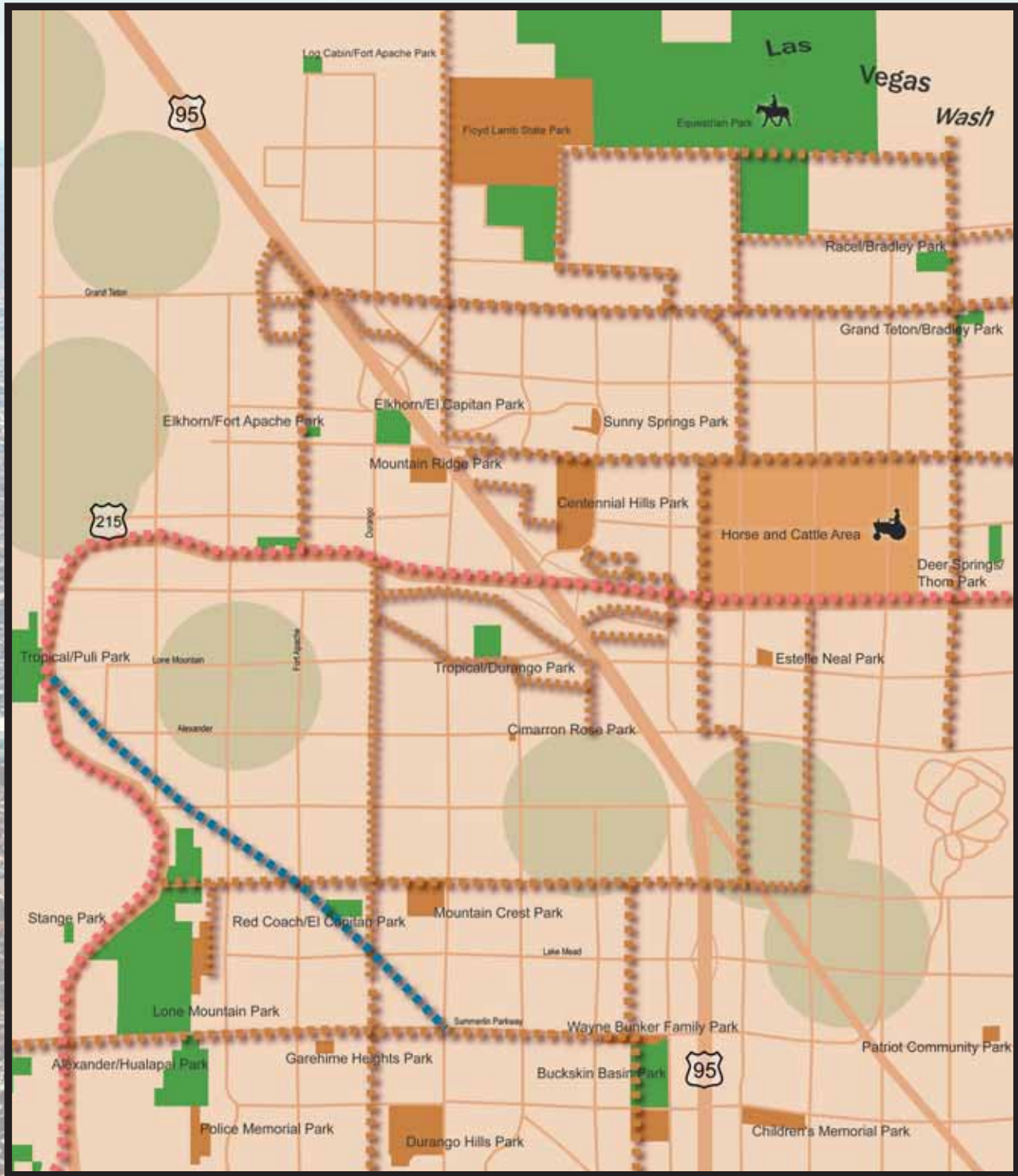


For more information about this Plan please visit the project web site at www.lasvegasopenspace.com, or write to:

City of Las Vegas
Northwest Open Space Plan
Comprehensive Planning Division
Development Services Center
731 South 4th Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101



Northwest Open Space Plan



- Proposed Parks
- Horse and Cattle Area
- Future Open Space
- Existing Parks
- Beltway Trail
- Indian Springs Corridor
- City Priority Trails

Improving Quality of Life and Community Character
Optimal, cost effective, sustainable implementation and management of open spaces